

Legislative Testimony
HB 5630 AAC The Establishment Of Licensure For An Advanced
Dental Hygiene Practitioner
Public Health Committee
Monday, March 16, 2009
Dr. James Marshall

My name is James Marshall. I am a dentist in practice in Woodbury, CT since 1990. Beginning in 1993 I have worked one day per week in a FQHC providing dental treatment to those who need care but cannot obtain it, regardless of the reason. These health centers understand that I will not compromise the quality of the care I give. I treat the health center patients the same as I treat my patients in Woodbury. When I read HB 5630 as an attempt to improve access to dental care in Connecticut, I am struck by two contradictions that would be obvious to anyone working in public health.

- 1) The issue isn't that there aren't enough qualified providers willing and able to do the needed work, the problem is that there isn't adequate space to provide the care. The Staywell Health Center on South Main St. in Waterbury has nine dental operatories. Often is the time I must wait for a chair to see my scheduled patient (Of which I typically have 10 – 15 for the day.). The Waterbury Oral Health Collaborative currently provides examinations, cleanings, and sealants for children in their schools in an attempt to alleviate the space restrictions in the clinic. Therefore, I believe more health centers are needed, not more providers.
- 2) I have a bachelor's degree in biology from Rutgers University, a doctor of dental medicine degree from Temple University, and I am a fellow in the Academy of General Dentistry. To believe that the proposed ADHP will receive adequate training to perform at the standard of care that I and my colleagues do is foolish and puts the public at risk. I am not being proprietary; my dental hygienist currently performs tasks that once were delegated to me. Last week the New York Times reported that in Maine (where there are not enough dental providers), physicians are being trained to extract teeth and these doctors are having a difficult time. I am concerned that the legislature is trying to remedy a situation without being informed as to the nature of the issue.

I truly believe that this proposal is of no benefit to the people of Connecticut. To the contrary, I find it severely detrimental. As doctors, our first rule is "Do no harm." This legislation is harmful.

If I may be of any further service, do not hesitate to call me. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
James B. Marshall, DMD FAGD
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